

# Video of the Week

## Shallow Grave more than a Fiction wannabe



*Shallow Grave*  
Starring Ewan McGregor  
and Kerry Fox  
Directed by Danny Boyle  
Written by John Hodge

However, they also find a satchel — one of those cute Limey terms — filled with money. They decide to keep the money and ditch the body of their dear chum.

*Grave* is a scary, suspense-filled film in the grand tradition of the master of suspense, Alfred Hitchcock.

Many filmmakers have tried to reproduce Hitchcock's power of terror and insanity. Movies such as *Pacific Heights* have tried to capitalize on the dark side of human nature, but have failed miserably. Perhaps *Grave* proves that such suspense techniques can only be accomplished by the residents of a tiny, fog-enshrouded island, where head cheese is a delicacy.

While McGregor's performance as Alex, the loud-mouthed flatmate, may attract most fans, Chris Eccleston's performance as David, the nerdy roommate, gives this film its terror.

Rarely has a such a mentally disturbed character been given such humanity. Eccleston captures the "scared little boy" aspect of psychos that is so often overlooked.

Screenwriter John Hodge delivers a subtle and clever script, nothing like the loud violence of *Pulp Fiction* as *Grave's* video box would have the viewer believe. Plot twists dominate the film, which is masterful in its deception.

Director Danny Boyle borrows heavily from such Hitchcock masterpieces as *Vertigo* and *Rear Window*. Boyle's brilliant camera work shows through in this film, as it does in *Trainspotting* and *A Life Less Ordinary*.

While *Grave* may not be as exciting or as energetic as the trio's other two films, it proves they are not trapped in genre's like other artists of the day.

While I am sure McGregor will go on to bigger and better things since he has been cast in the three new *Star Wars* films, and Boyle and Hodge may go their separate ways, the fact these chaps were able to make three incredible films in a row is staggering. This is a trilogy that should be boxed and released in 20 years, only they won't need quite as many digital effects.

—By Aaron Meier

Everyone remembers the scene in *Trainspotting* where Ewan McGregor's character visits the "Worst Toilet in Scotland." Well, before McGregor shaved his head and "chose a life, chose a job and chose a career," and before he became Cameron Diaz's kidnapper in *A Life Less Ordinary*, he dug himself a *Shallow Grave*.

When I had first heard of *Grave*, I was walking through the movie rental aisles in the grocery store on one Friday night. I had passed by it a million times and after reading the box, thought, "Who really wants to see the next *Pulp Fiction* again?"

Finally, *Grave* won out over playing Mah Jong with my sister, and I picked up this piece of what I thought was Euro-trash and headed to my VCR.

Oh boy, let me tell you something, *Grave* certainly impressed me in more ways than one.

*Shallow Grave* is the first film from Danny Boyle, John Hodge and Ewan McGregor, the triad of Scottish creativity that brought *Trainspotting* to the States.

The premise behind the film is something straight out of a Hitchcock film, except no one dresses like their mother. Three flatmates — apartments are called "flats" in Scotland — find a fourth roommate to move into their apartment. After a few days, they find him dead in his bedroom.

# Kid Fantastic lives up to name with latest performance at Dixie

Kid Fantastic stepped into the ring Saturday night through the crowd and smoke of Bryan's Dixie Theatre. The Kids faced pretty even odds against winning the crowd's attention, already turned by show opener Jack Rabbit King. Fortunately, the Kids mustered up a come-from-behind victory, chalking up a win with their quirky personality and style.

Kid Fantastic is a four-man tag team of welterweight power pop from College Station. Nathan McKown, the band's answer to Tommy Stinson of The Refreshments, made a big entrance with his pig tails and low-slung bass. Drummer Adreon Henry sunk into his junior-sized, jungle-print drum kit, and while Henry may not be as funky a dresser as McKown, he definitely has the better moves, earning the name "Dances with Drums."

Tim Austin took command of the stage with guitar and lead vocals. Austin's bulging eyes held the crowd's focus as he played and sang, exhibiting throbbing neck veins that could make Henry Rollins jealous.

The only one who looked out of place was Jason Schleter, who sulked alone in the corner to play lead guitar.

McKown and Schleter framed Austin like polar opposites, like angel and devil on the shoulders of the vocal conscience of the group.

McKown's court jester antics thankfully grew less annoying as the show progressed. He kept the night



Kid Fantastic is (from left to right): Tim Austin, vocals; Adreon Henry, drums; Jason Schleter, lead guitar; and Tim McKown, bass guitar.

interesting by jiving with the crowd between songs and throwing in the occasional bass line from Berlin's "Take My Breath Away."

The opening number began simple and slow, like a stranger beckoning with candy. Before the crowd knew what happened, they were kidnapped by the Kids and forced to bounce and sing along with the choruses.

The Kids came out punching, but quickly succumbed to sloppy band cohesion and awkward pauses throughout the first half of the show.

But when a couple of socially-lubricated audience members decided it was time to slam dance, the Kids brilliantly introduced the subdued "This Hamburger Helper Tastes Gamey" to soothe the crowd.

The Kids hit their pace after the break. The second half of the set unearthed songs that broke away from

their standard two-and-a-half-minute pop songs, and the extended journey finally showcased the band members' talents. Schleter especially shone through with a number of well-placed solos.

One of the last songs featured Henry picking out a tiny melody on an ancient Yamaha keyboard. The variety worked, but it was ten songs too late.

The audience responded to the vibe and energy of the songs in a variety of ways, including a peculiar exhibition of the fabled "Bertha-Butt Boogie" by an obviously disoriented spectator.

The Kids have sucker punched the rough edges of grunge in favor of the bubble-gum refrains of '77 punk. The results are optimistic and, judging from McKown's wardrobe, way more chic than flannel rock.

—By Chris Martin

# Last Summer a waste of moviegoers' time

## Movie Review

*I Know What You Did Last Summer*  
Starring Jennifer Love Hewitt and Sara Michelle Gellar  
Directed by Jim Gillespie  
Playing at Hollywood 16  
★★ (out of five)



*I Know What You Did Last Summer* tries hard to recreate the magic and success of *Scream*, but in the end, the tired plot and bad acting will only try moviegoers' patience.

The trailers for the film advertise it as being from the makers of *Scream* even though the only thing the two movies have in common is the same screenwriter.

The movie starts off with four teens celebrating the end of their high school careers. As the quartet speed home after a rowdy night, they hit someone.

In a panic, our happy teens are more frightened than a stray cat at a dog show.

In a fit of brilliance and self-interest, the teenage road warriors dump the body and vow to never talk about the incident again.

Fast forward one year. The dreams of youth have become the nightmares of adulthood. Julie James (Jennifer Love Hewitt), the brain of the group, has almost failed out of college. Beauty queen Helen Shivers (Sara Michelle Gellar) is selling perfume at the local five and dime. Quarterback king Barry Cox (Ryan Phillippe) is a floundering alcoholic, and sensitive guy Ray Bronson (Freddie Prinze, Jr.) is a fisherman.

The group's boring lives take a turn for the worse when Julie receives a note saying "I know what you did last summer." Ter-

rified someone has found out their secret, Julie rounds up the rest of the group. Soon, people start dying, girls start crying and basically that is *I Know What You Did Last Summer*.

The movie's first mistake is aligning itself so closely with last Christmas' hit *Scream*.

Where as *Scream* was a witty horror film satire, *Last Summer* is a straight forward slasher flick and not a very good one.

Audiences shouldn't let the hype fool them — this is no different than the low budget schlock they show on late night cable television.

The opening scene of a seaside cliff on a dark night is a great one, but it betrays the quality of the movie. It is not a good sign when the first scene in a movie is its best.

The plot drowns in such murky depths, the audience might wonder if it did not cast itself off the seaside cliffs in the movie's opening scene.

There are some chilling spots, but they have been done a hundred times before in similar films. The rest of the movie will leave the audience snickering rather than shivering.

The movie is full of the standard stalk and slash scenes. Quak-

ers could probably do a better job when it comes to brutal killing.

Most of the cast acts as if they are trying our for an after-school special. The television background of the leads is evident, but not in a way to gather pride.

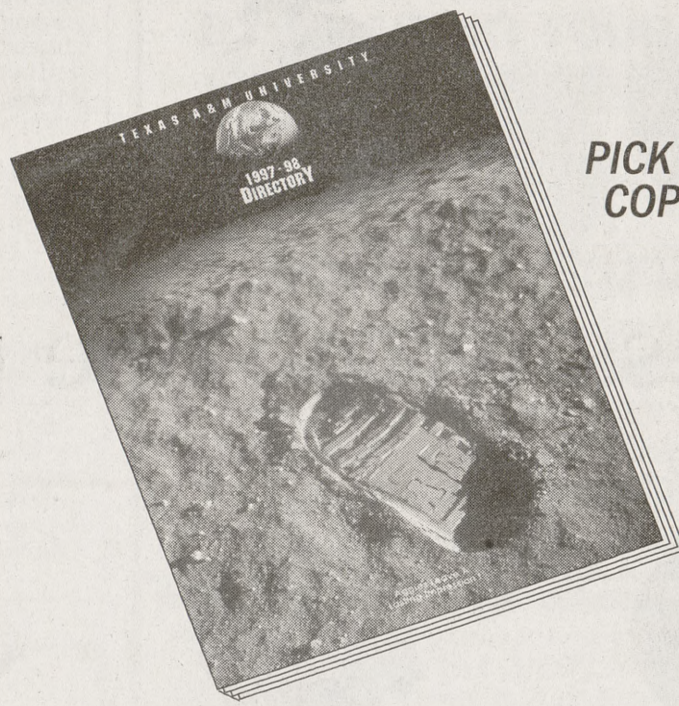
It is obvious Hewitt would like to follow in the footsteps of "Party of Five" co-star Neve Campbell as a Hollywood *Scream* queen. Here is some advice for Ms. Hewitt: If you can make people laugh this hard, maybe you should try comedy.

"Buffy the Vampire Slayer" star Sara Michelle Gellar is not much more than a whiny prima donna. The use of actresses in the movie took a nose dive when the director decided to put them in ultra tight, body hugging clothes, rather than acting classes.

The male leads are quite unforgettable. They look and act like they just missed the cover of *YM*. Ellen Degeneres' gal pal Anne Heche has an interesting minor role as local white trash. She really works the part.

If moviegoers want a good slasher flick, this isn't it. They should try renting *Scream* or anything else on the horror aisle at the local video store.

—By Travis Irby



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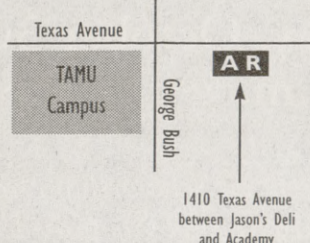
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